meet again. It seemed to me then that nothing short of death could atone for our guilt of preaching an armed revolt when we had no weapons.

I tell this story not because the feelings of a handful of inexperienced youngsters deserve to be remembered fifty years later but because this was the night of October 17 to 18—the night the general strike had been won. The Tsar had capitulated.

THE MANIFESTO OF OCTOBER 17

I expected to be arrested that night but the police did not come. In the morning I went to the University to get in touch with the party. To avoid unpleasant encounters, I took a droshky. Overnight the streets had changed. All the shops were open. Small groups of people gathered at the street corners. Newsboys ran by, shouting, "Ukase of the Tsar!" I called a newsboy and got a copy of the Manifesto. It was vague in parts, and its end obviously contradicted its beginning, as if it had been written by two different persons. It announced that the Tsar, disturbed by the disorders among his beloved subjects, had decided to establish a constitutional regime. A State Duma would be elected by all the people, and in the future no law would be passed and the government would make no expenditure without its approval. The end of the autocratic regime in Russia, however, was announced in the old autocratic language as an expression of the supreme will of the Tsar, and his autocratic title was explicitly restated.

The Manifesto did not promise any immediate change in the government or say whether the Cabinet would be responsible to the Duma. The power of the latter was not clear. The pledge that no law would be passed without the Duma's approval did not necessarily mean that the Tsar and his ministers would respect the laws voted by the people's representatives. Furthermore, the promise of elections to the Duma by all the people could mean anything from an electoral law with equal rights for all to a system that would leave all the power in the hands of a privileged minority. In brief, the Manifesto, an outgrowth of panic in the ruling circles and a result of a compromise between the different groups around the throne, could be interpreted in many ways according to one's trust in the Tsar and his entourage.

Before the droshky reached the Neva quay, my mind was made up: the Manifesto was a fraud. Our job was to unmask it and carry on the offensive.

Students packed the entrance hall of the University mess. A lib-